CALIBER PRESS

NEGATIVE BURN

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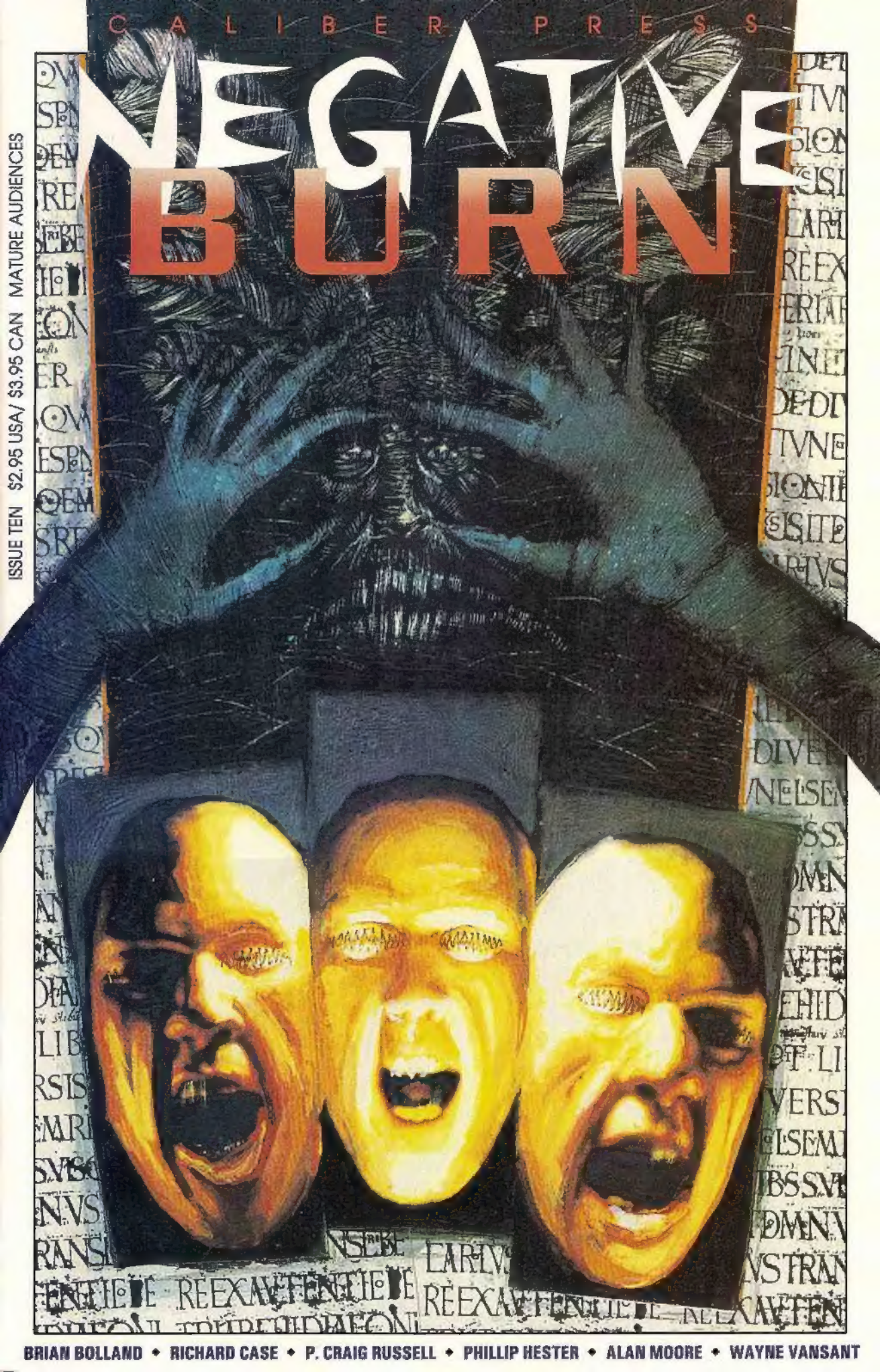

BRIAN BOLLAND • RICHARD CASE • P. CRAIG RUSSELL • PHILLIP HESTER • ALAN MOORE • WAYNE VANSANT

NEGATIVE BURN

VOLUME ONE
NUMBER TEN

an anthology
Joe Pruett /Editor

P.O. Box 672162, Marietta, GA 30067-0037

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illustrated by Richard Case

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illustrated by Bil Ruth

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written and illustrated by David Mazzucchelli

Cover Art by Marc Erickson
Back Cover Art by P. Craig Russell

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KNIGHTS OF THE SKULL
COME ON, NIKOLAUS! COME ON, BOY!
HEY, QUIT THAT... HA HA HA HA...
I LOVE YOU, NIKOLAUS.
I LOVE YOU, TOO, WIENAND. NOW GET YOUR ASS UP...
...IT'S TIME TO CHASE THE IVAN'S AGAIN.

A BOY AND HIS DOG
RUSSIA. FEBRUARY, 1943. GENERAL PAUL HAUSSER HAS LAUNCHED HIS WAFFEN-SS DIVISIONS INTO A BRISTLING COUNTERATTACK AGAINST KHARKOV. HAUSSER'S ASPIRATIONS ARE LOFTY...AND DESPERATE! HE HOPES TO HALT THE SOVIET WINTER OFFENSIVE THAT HAS ALREADY SWALLOWED THE 6TH ARMY AT STALINGRAD, BEFORE IT CAN SWALLOW UP HIS FORCES TOO.
BUT TO THE MEN ON THE GROUND, THERE IS LITTLE INTEREST IN SUCH HAUGHTY GAINS. THEY WOULD LIKE TO JUST ADVANCE A FEW YARDS OVER THE BLOODED RUSSIAN SOIL...AND SURVIVE!
ALRIGHT. THE STREET IS GETTING NARROWER. SPREAD OUT, AND FOR GOD'S SAKE, KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR ANTI-PANZER WEAPONS.

OH-OH. THAT SOUNDED LIKE A 76MM.
BA-ROOOM
COME ON, SEPP. TIME FOR US TO GO TO WORK.
LET'S SEE... THEY SHOULD BE AROUND HERE SOMEPLACE.
THESE IVANS SHOULD LEARN TO PROTECT THEIR REARS.
THIS IS WHAT WE DO...
...WE GIVE THE INFANTRY A QUICK SPRAY WITH OUR MP40S AND THEN I'LL TAKE THE T-34 OUT WITH THIS. READY?
WHEN EVER YOU ARE.

BBURR.RUUUPP?!
BBRRUUPP?
HERE I GO.
MAKE IT QUICK!
COME ON UP, BOYS. HOISSER AND SEPP HAVE DONE IT AGAIN.

VERDAMMUNG! A RUSSIAN MINE DOG!
BLAST THE CUR BEFORE IT REACHES THE FIRST TANK!
WHA...?
CLIK
BA-ROOM

OH... MY HEAD ...
LOOKOUT! THERE'S ANOTHER! SHOOT THE BITCH!
NO! NO! NO, GIRL, EH, BOY.
HOISSER, WHAT IN HELL IS THAT PARTNER OF YOURS THINK HE'S DOING? THERE'S HALF A POUND OF EXPLOSIVES ON THAT MANGY MONGREL!
COME ON, PUP. YOU JUST WANT SOMETHING TO EAT. THERE'S NOTHING FOR YOU UNDER THAT PANZER.

COME ON, NIKOLAUS. HOW ABOUT A NICE HOT STRING OF WURSTCHEN. I'D LIKE THAT MYSELF.
BOOOM
STROHMANN! HE'S STILL AT IT.
HEY, SEPP! QUIT FOOLING AROUND.
COME ON, NIKOLAUS. JUST A LITTLE FARTHER...

SEPP! LOOK OUT!
CLICK!
KER-RAW
GOTT SEI DANK! HE'S STILL ALIVE.
HE'S ALRIGHT, LT. SKALKA. HE HANDLED THAT MINE DOG, UH, JUST THE WAY WE PLANNED IT.
VERY UNORTHODOX, BUT HE SURE SAVED MY PANZER.
I'M PUTTING THIS MAN IN FOR THE IRON CROSS.
I THINK I'LL KICK HIS ASS... FOR SCARING THE SHIT OUT OF ME.

MR. MAMOULIAN

NO FEET

[13] BOLLAND 22 6 87

YOU SEE THAT PIGEON ?
IT'S GOT NO FEET
THEY PAINT RADIO-ACTIVE PAINT ON WINDOW LEDGES, YOU KNOW
THE BIRDS LAND ON 'EM, THEIR FEET CURL UP INTO CLUBS AND EVENTUALLY DROP OFF
NASTY BUSINESS
SAW A CHAP WITH NO FEET ONCE
NO KNEES FOR THAT MATTER
HE'D STEPPED ON A MINE, POOR BLIGHTER
EL ALAMEIN. DESERT CAMPAIN YOU KNOW
JUST SAT THERE BLUBBING
DISGUSTING SIGHT
GROWN MAN BLUBBING LIKE THAT
LUCKILY I HAD MY LEE ENFIELD WITH ME

twilight people
BOOK 3 chapter two
© 1994 Mark Roberts
I can feel the rest of my body twisting. I've got to stop this before I start to look like a human curly-fry.
One small step for gravity...
...one giant step...
..and my inner workings'll be splashed on the concrete like some horrific expressionist work in progress.
FRANK, HEY FRANK, IT'S ME...COREY!
I GOT PEPPERONI!
LOOK OUT below!
FRANK?!!?
HANG ON BUDDY, AN' I'LL CATCH YOU...

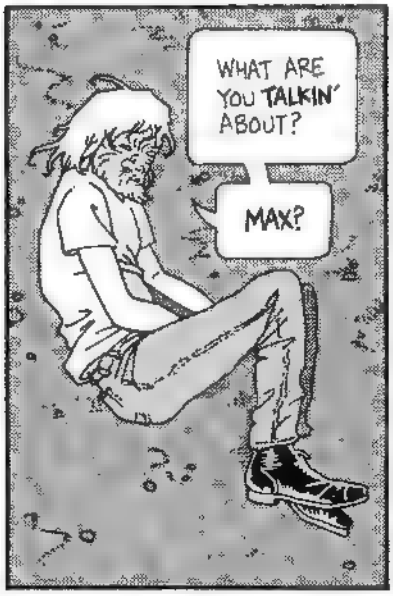
"...IN HELL.."
THE PORTAL OPENS SOMEWHERE OVER HERE...
THERE HE IS!
FRANK...YOU LOOK ROUGH.
IF YOU'D HUNG 'ROUND THE APARTMENT, WE COULDA HAD PIZZA!
SHEEE...YOU PISSED YOUR PANTS.
OH WELL, WELCOME TO HELL!
C'MON MAN, THERE'SA LOTTA STUFF WE GOTTA TAKE CARE OF HERE, YA KNOW...
This is the one you chose to possess the power?!
YEAH WELL, HE CLEANS UP NICER THAN THIS, YA SEE.
AH FRANK, AFTER ALL I'VE PUT YOU THROUGH IT'S TIME I GAVE YOU THE...
...LOWDOWN.

"YOU GOTTA KNOW I WANNA ANSWER ALL YOUR QUESTIONS, FRANK, BUT FIRST YOU NEED TO HEAR THIS STORY 'BOUT THIS ANGEL NAMED LUCIFER...
Sorry babe, no autographs.
"LUCIFER WAS, LIKE, A REALLY POPULAR GUY UP IN HEAVEN. HE WAS IT AND THE PROBLEM WAS THAT HE KNEW HE WAS IT.
"WELL, I MEAN, IT'S KINDA UNDERSTANDABLE WHEN YOU GOT ALL THESE OTHER ANGELS KISSIN' YOUR BUTT AN' ALL... EVEN THE BIG GUY CALLED HIM THE MORNING SUN. I MEAN THAT COULD PUMP YOUR MELON, RIGHT?
hmm... Lookin' good. Yes!
Give it your best shot, Sunshine!!
"SO ANYWAY, LUCIFER STARTED THINKIN' HE'D PULL A GANGSTER MOVE AND TAKE OVER HEAVEN.
"A REAL BADASS ANGEL, MICHAEL, KICKED LUCIFER AND HIS BOYS' BUTTS ALL THE WAY TO JUDGMENT DAY! THEN MICHAEL HAULED 'EM UP BEFORE MR. BIG HIMSELF!
"WELL, HE GOT SHOT DOWN IN THIS BIG TURF WAR. ANGEL AGAINST ANGEL IN A MAJOR RUMBLE.

"THE BIG GUY TOL' LUCIFER THAT IF HE EVER TRIED SHOWIN' HIS FACE IN HEAVEN AGAIN HE'D SLAP HIM FROM HERE TO ETERNITY...
"...THEN HE SHAVED LUCIFER'S HEAD, CLIPPED HIS WINGS AND OPENED A TRAP DOOR, SENDING HIM AND HIS GANG OF BLACK ANGELS ON A ONE-WAY TICKET TO NOWHERE!
"WHEN THEY CRASHED, THEY MET UP WITH KING BEELZEBUB, WHO HAD HIS HAND IN ALL THE ACTION. HE RULED FROM HIS THRONE IN HELL.
"LUCIFER, AFTER HAVING TASTED THE BIG TIME, DECIDED THAT IF HE COULDN'T HAVE HEAVEN, HE'D TAKE OVER HELL.
"HELL WASN'T WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT, BURNIN' AN' TORTURE AN' STUFF... NO, IT WAS A MAJOR PARTY SCENE. HELL WAS LIKE A JAMMIN' FRAT HOUSE.
"LUCIFER WAITED FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT, STROLLED INTO THE PARTY AN' SMOKED BEELZEBUB. THE PARTY NEVER EVEN STOPPED.
And so, Lucifer, you pledge your allegiance to me, forsaking all others?
This territory ain't big enough for the both of us!

"LUCIFER FINALLY FOUND A KINGDOM TO RULE, BUT HE STILL MISSED HIS GLORY DAYS IN HEAVEN.
"LUCIFER USTA GET SLOPPY DRUU-UNK! HE'D MOPE AROUND THE PALACE AND THEN SUDDENLY BREAK INTO A CRYING JAG.
"WHEN HE DISAPPEARED WITHOUT SAYING A WORD, NO ONE EVEN QUESTIONED IT.
He used to love me. I was his (sniff) favorite!!
CLINK!
"THE SCRATCHES... THEY RUN THE WORKS NOW, BUT THEY'VE NEVER REALLY BEEN ACCEPTED AS LUCIFER'S REPLACEMENT.
"SO, A PLAN WAS COOKED UP TO CREATE THE NEW KING OF HELL BY HAVING ONE OF THE FALLEN ANGELS GET SOME SPECIAL HUMAN PREGNANT.

THAT KING IS THE BABY MAX IS GONNA HAVE


WHAT ARE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?
MAX?

C'MON FRANK, WE GOTTA GO SEE MAX. SHE'S GIVIN' BIRTH TODAY!

CONTINUED

If you read books 1 & 2 of Twilight People you're going to HELL!

What have you got to lose?

Send check or money order for $2.95 per issue with $1.95 for shipping and handling to

Caliber Press
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Alan Moore's

Original Song by Alan Moore

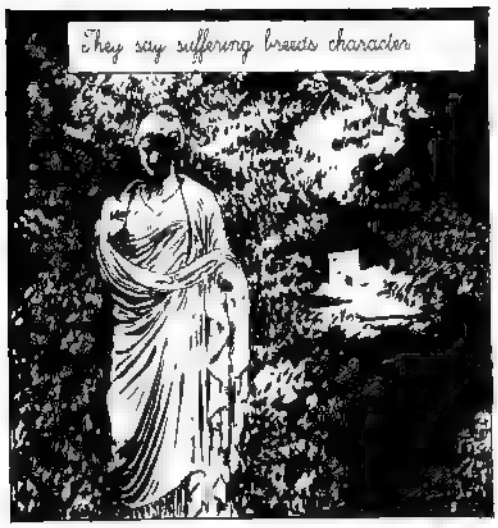
Illustrated by Richard Case

In Greenwich, she's been counting stars and calculating time
Crouched in a doorway since she came down from the North
And though her come-on is ridiculous, her skin was once sublime
Her eyes are fixed upon the light that's hung above Canary Wharf
She believes another Halcion might ease her sense of doubt:
They'll Persian carpet-bomb the Persian Gulf before the night is out
And around her feet they'll rearrange her small change and her rings
As an offering to the city of imaginary things.

And at the T.V. rental shop a dozen silent screens
Are showing minarets against a flashbulb sky,
Skunk in her bubble-wrap she hopes that this turns out to be dream
At Hawksmoor's hospital in Greenwich they're already standing by
And the whore of Babylon, astride a seven-headed beast
She came from Rotherhithe, by tunnel, to St. George's-in-the-East;
Was bathed in frankincense and myrrh by three wise oriental kings
Who'd left their gold back in the city of imaginary things

On the M-25 there's tail-lights moving like a lava-flood;
Bankers and sergeants, driving home to Aldershot.
They've filled their bumpers up with stickers and their petrol-tanks with blood
Meanwhile the girl they shagged last Saturday shares needles in a squat
And it's like Alladin's lamp with calibrations down the side
It gets her through this hectic night upon a magic carpet ride
Scheharezade's dried up; now the Arabian Nights are filled with wings
She files her stories from the city of imaginary things.

Songbook


They say suffering breeds character

and character breeds faith . . .

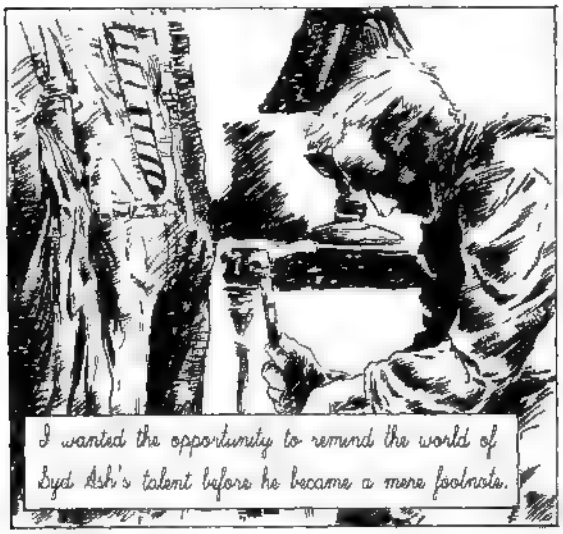
THE ART SPECTRUM
by Mark Lucas & Bil Ruth

If so

Syd Ash must have a wealth of faith, given his life.

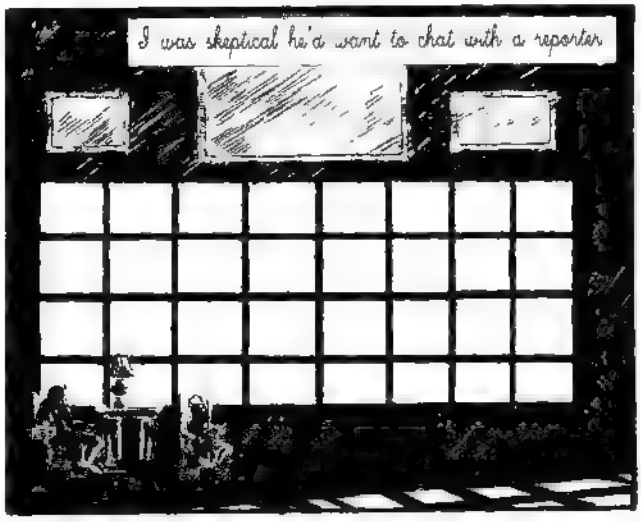
Racked with cancer this once great artiste has been buried in this home . . .

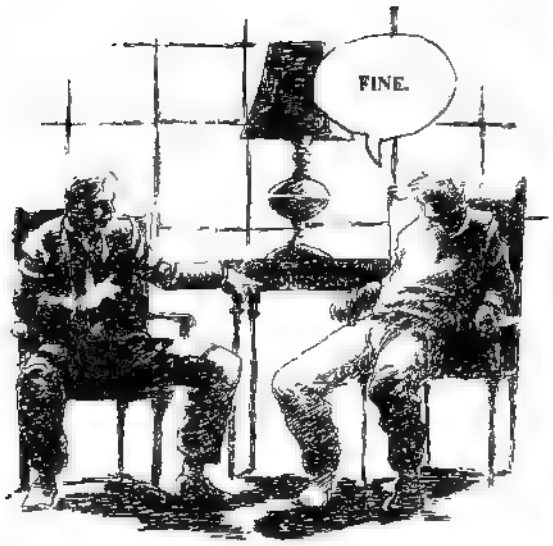
shunned and forgotten.


I wanted the opportunity to remind the world of Syd Ash's talent before he became a mere footnote.

This man, who had influenced the way a generation viewed jade carving, lived an insular life

I offered him a chance to ease his solitary burden.


I was skeptical he'd want to chat with a reporter


FINE.

MR. ANTON DOTSON,
I'LL GIVE YOU MY LIFE.

I JUST DON'T THINK
YOU'RE READY FOR IT.

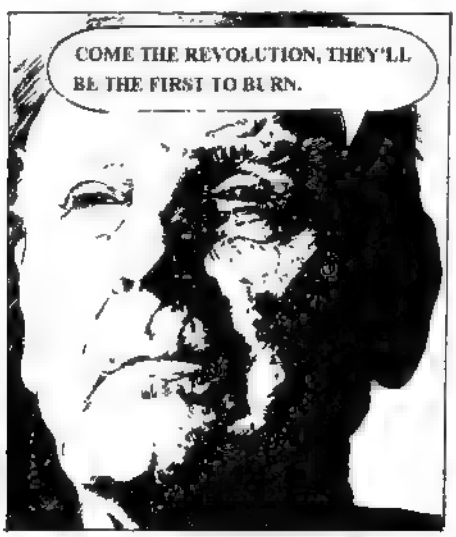
I wasn't

Syd explained how he grew up poor in Brooklyn but found running scams a way to survive

SHARE THE PAIN.

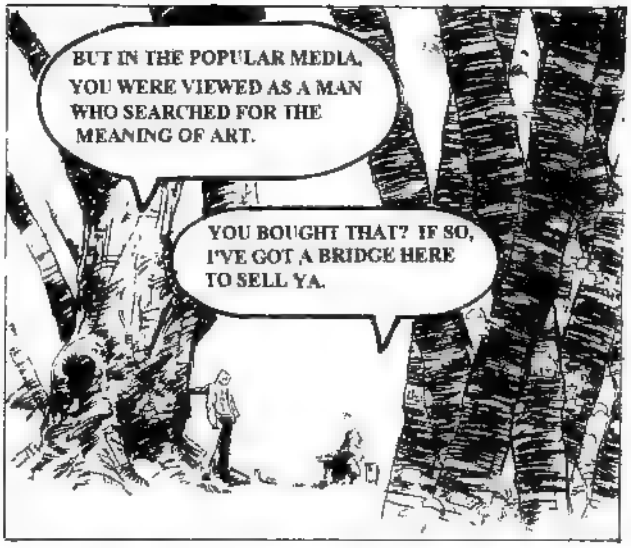
Seeking a niche, Syd began self-carving crude sculptures

Selling art became a means to connect with wealthier patrons. To Syd he was still pulling a scam.

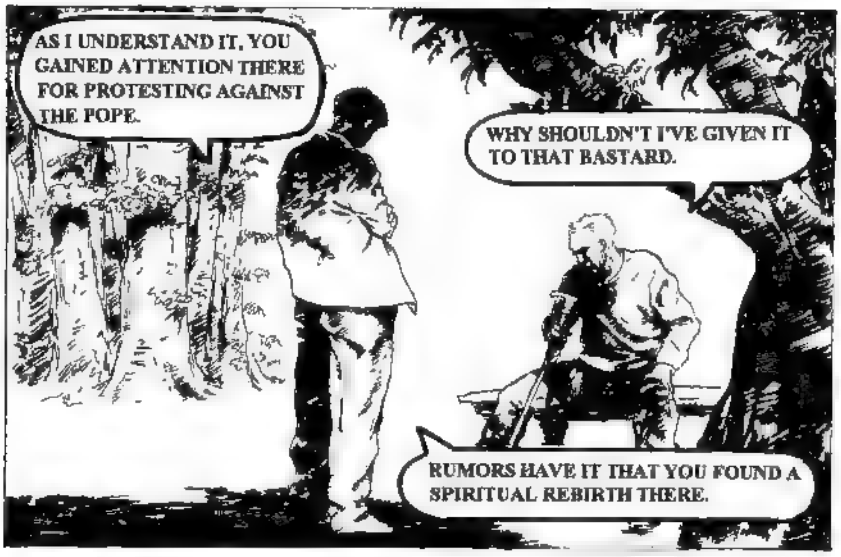

COME THE REVOLUTION, THEY'LL BE THE FIRST TO BURN.

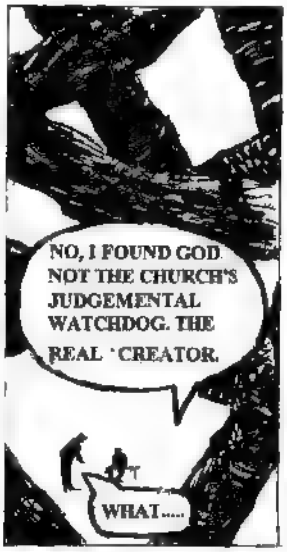
To his surprise, he found a burgeoning ummah

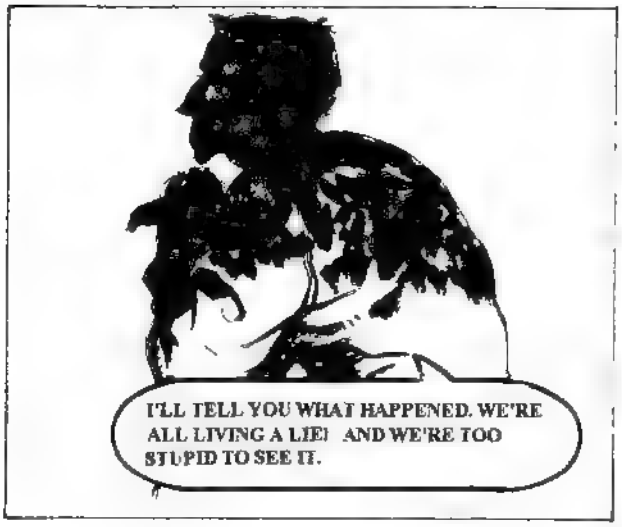
YOU BECAME QUITE POPULAR.
MMMMMM.
NOW YOU 'RE COOKING
WITH CRISCO.
THE SCULPTURES WERE CRAP. BUT THE
CRITICS LOVED 'EM.
THEY ALWAYS LOVE
THE CRAP.
I MADE ENOUGH BUCKS TO
KEEP THE FAMILY QUIET.
THAT'S ALL IT WAS ABOUT BACK THEN.
MONEY.
ART WAS WHAT I WANTED IT TO BE, WHAT
I NEEDED IT TO BE.
THAT WASN'T ART.


BUT IN THE POPULAR MEDIA, YOU WERE VIEWED AS A MAN WHO SEARCHED FOR THE MEANING OF ART.
YOU BOUGHT THAT? IF SO, I'VE GOT A BRIDGE HERE TO SELL YA.

IT WASN'T 'TIL I WENT TO IRELAND THAT I FOUND TRUE ART.
IRELAND.


AS I UNDERSTAND IT, YOU GAINED ATTENTION THERE FOR PROTESTING AGAINST THE POPE.
WHY SHOULDN'T I'VE GIVEN IT TO THAT BASTARD.
RUMORS HAVE IT THAT YOU FOUND A SPIRITUAL REBIRTH THERE.


NO, I FOUND GOD NOT THE CHURCH'S JUDGEMENTAL WATCHDOG. THE REAL CREATOR.
WHAT....


I'LL TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED. WE'RE ALL LIVING A LIE! AND WE'RE TOO STUPID TO SEE IT.

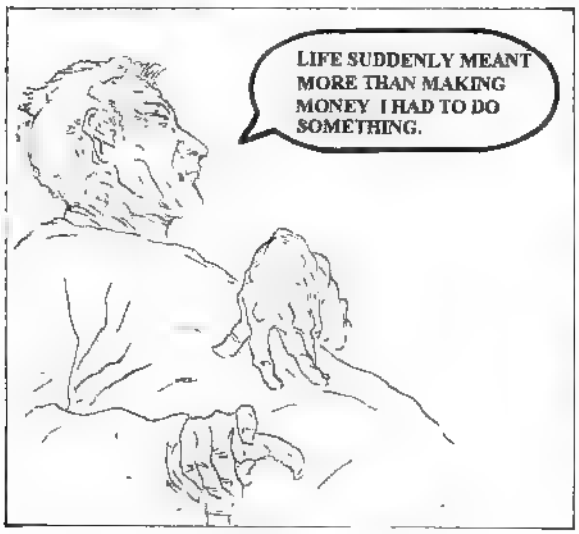
IN IRELAND I ASCENDED.
ASCENDED, I TELL YOU!

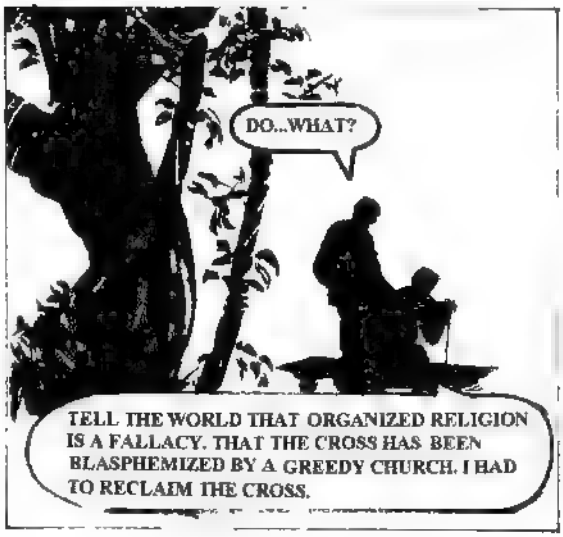
I WAS IN MY HOTEL IN IRELAND WITH MY PARTNER WHEN HE HAD A SEIZURE.

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. ALL I REMEMBER IS THAT I FELT QUEASY AND DIZZY. SOMETHING WAS HAPPENING TO ME, TOO.

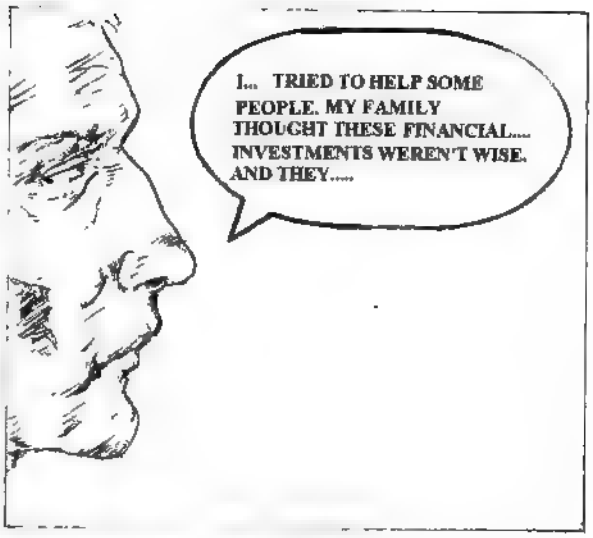
I SAW SOMETHING TRULY SPECIAL. I SUDDENLY REALIZED THAT THIS WAS A DIVINE MESSAGE.
DIVINE I TELL YOU.

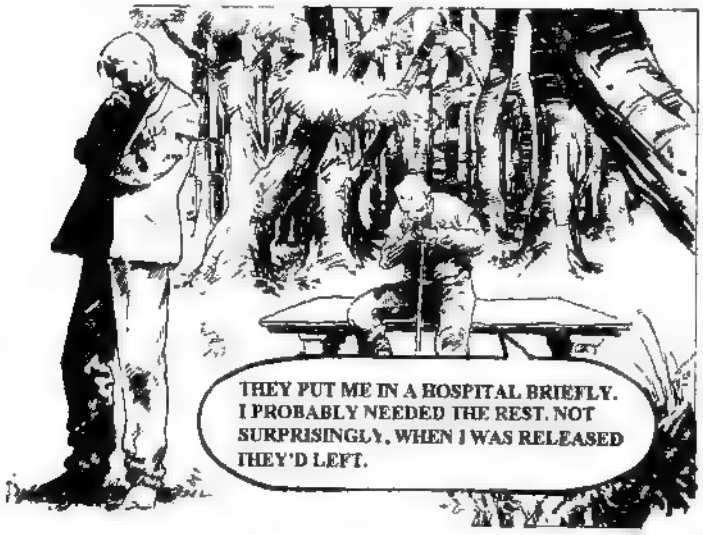
AL, MY PARTNER WAS FINE. BUT I WASN'T.


LIFE SUDDENLY MEANT MORE THAN MAKING MONEY I HAD TO DO SOMETHING.


DO...WHAT?
TELL THE WORLD THAT ORGANIZED RELIGION IS A FALLACY. THAT THE CROSS HAS BEEN BLASPHEMIZED BY A GREEDY CHURCH. I HAD TO RECLAIM THE CROSS.

WHEN I RETURNED HOME I FOUND MY FAMILY... CHANGED. THEY CHASTISED ME, CONSTRAINED ME, CRUCIFIED ME!


I... TRIED TO HELP SOME PEOPLE. MY FAMILY THOUGHT THESE FINANCIAL.... INVESTMENTS WEREN'T WISE. AND THEY.....

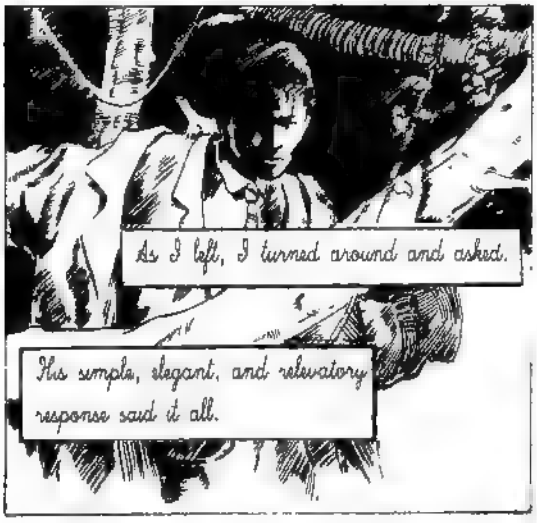

THEY PUT ME IN A HOSPITAL BRIEFLY. I PROBABLY NEEDED THE REST. NOT SURPRISINGLY, WHEN I WAS RELEASED THEY'D LEFT.

THEY TOOK MY MONEY, MY NAME,MY RESPECT. IT DIDN'T MATTER.

I DIDN'T SCULPT AFTER THAT. I'D FOUND MY TAO, MY SPIRITUAL CENTER. THAT'S ALL I NEEDED.

The interview had been too much for him.

When all was said and done, this man had seen and experienced and lived— more than most of us will in a lifetime.
He'd fought so many battles and survived. He's outlived many peers, and seemingly wanted to rest at this point.
He'd suffered for his art.
But, just what did he see in that hotel in Ireland that altered his life so?



This story is respectfully dedicated to the memory and art of Reed Crandall

P.R.

CLASSICS RESECRATED

Written By
DOUG WHEELER

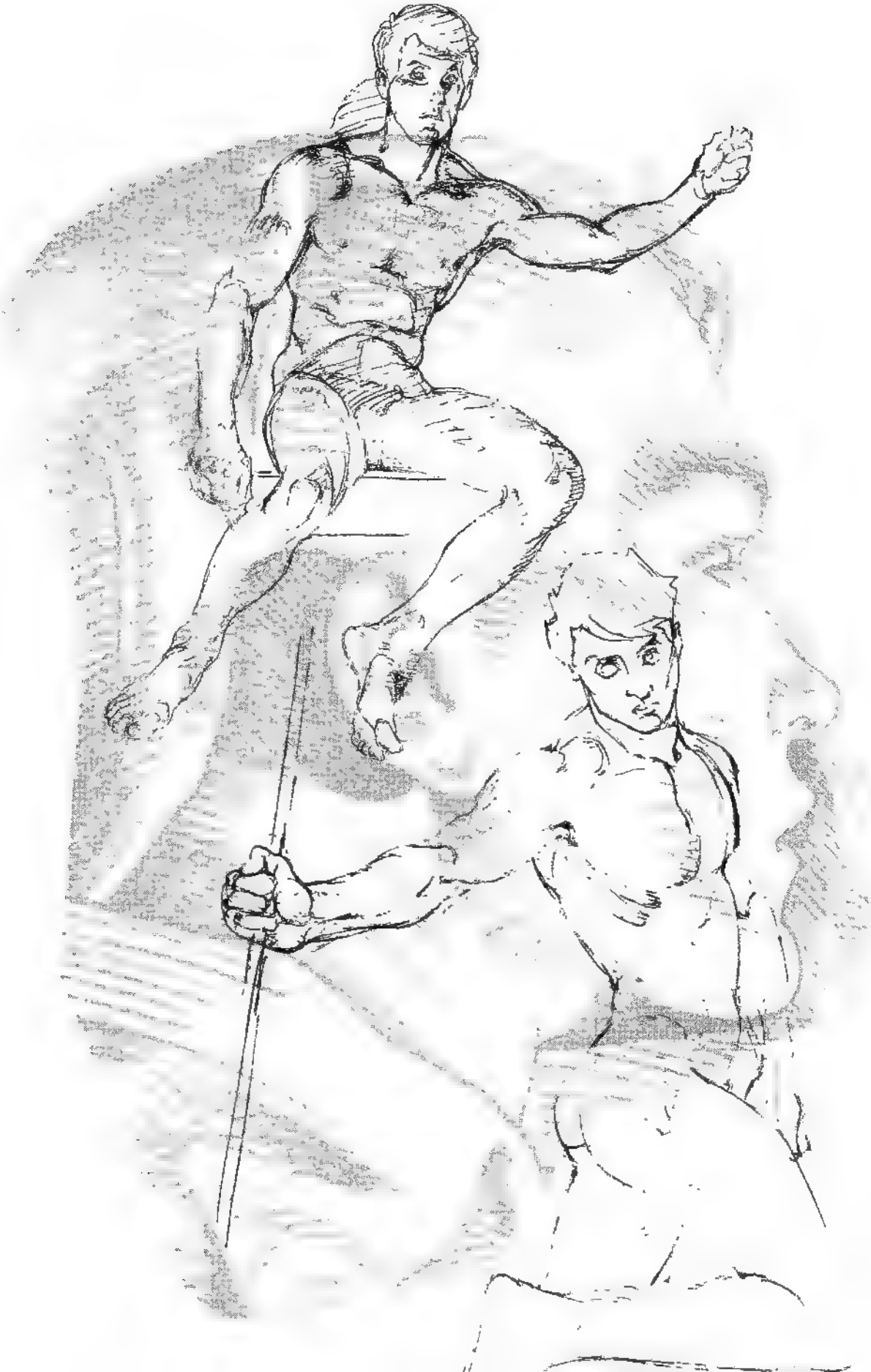
Illustrated By
GEORGE SCRIDERICK

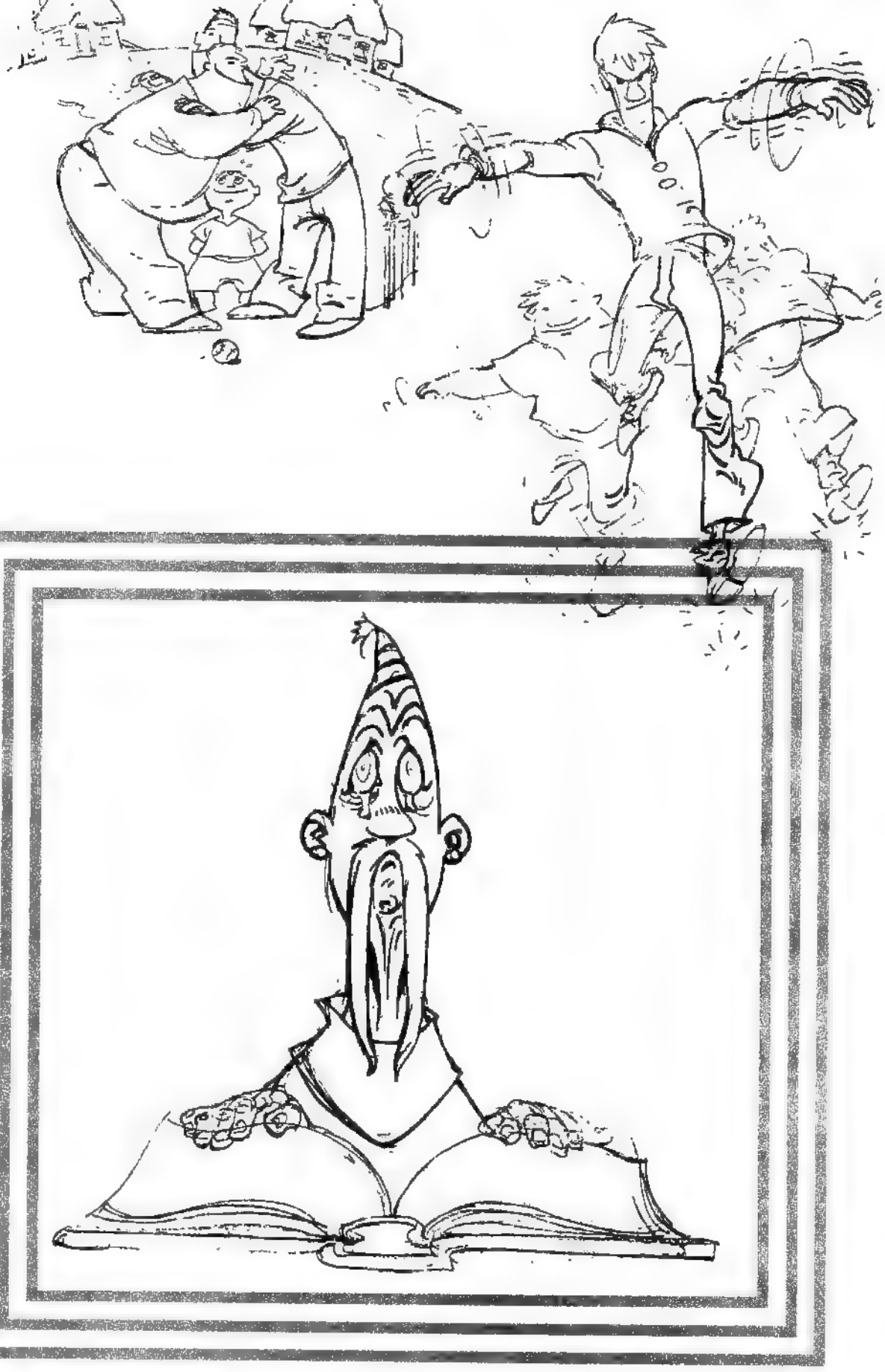
PAUL BUNYAN'S NATURE LESSON no.1

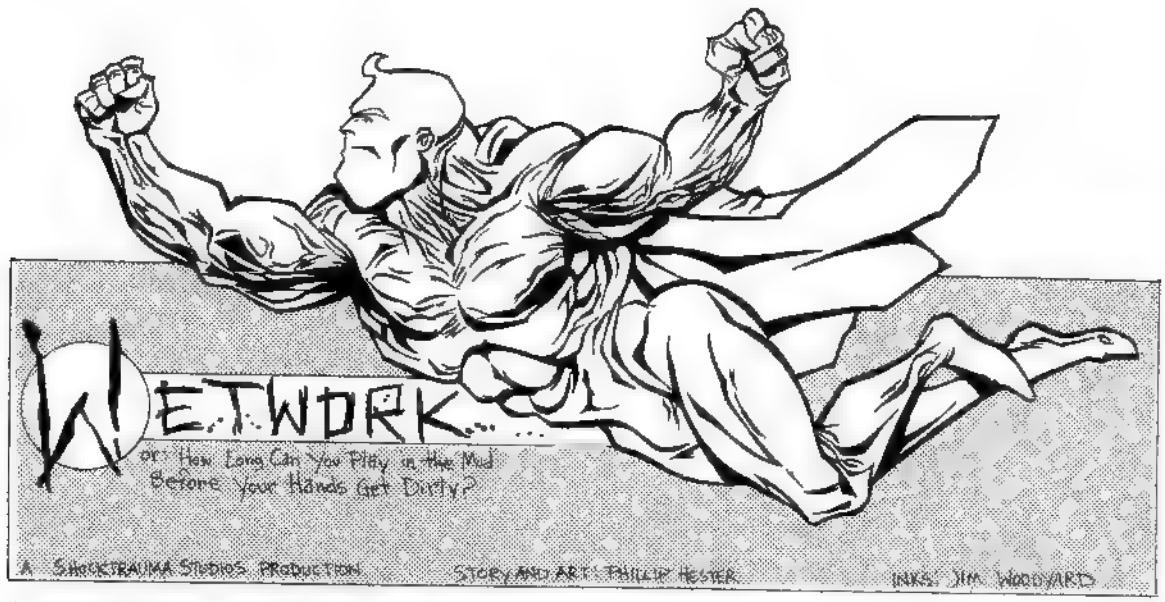
"Our Beneficial Sun"

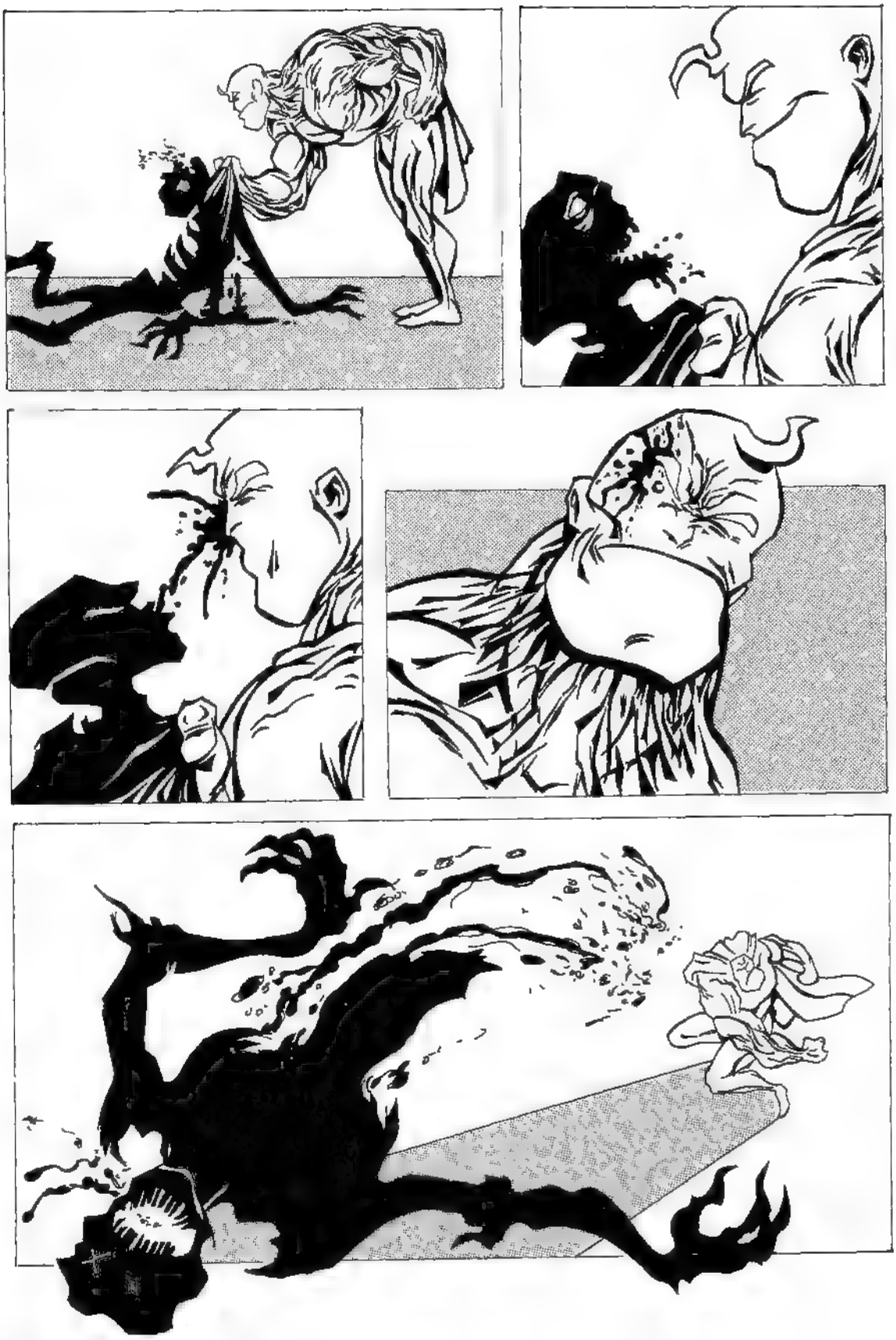
Craig Russell

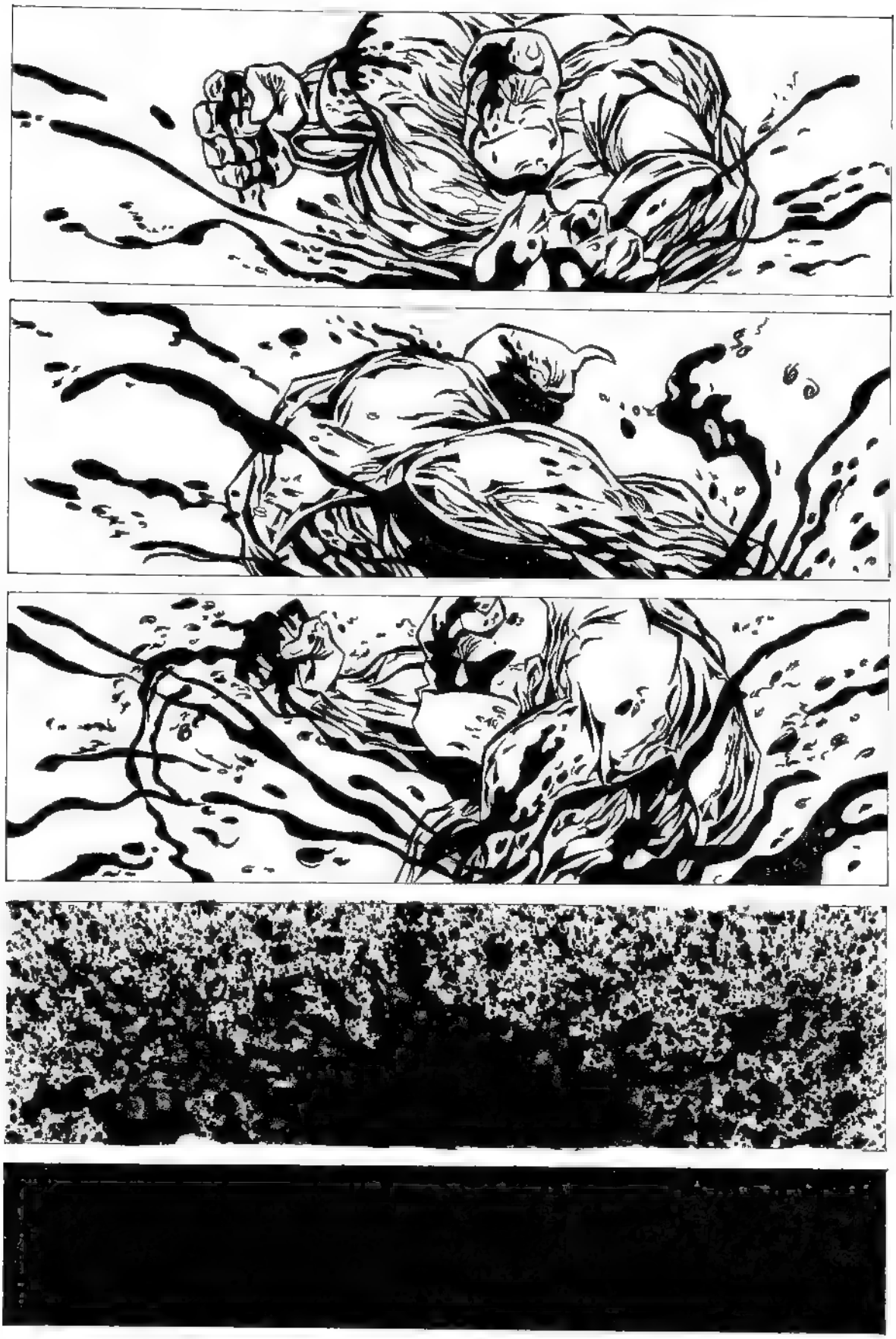
sketchbook






WETWORK...
or: How Long Can You Play in the Mud Before Your Hands Get Dirty?
A SHOCKTRAUMA STUDIOS PRODUCTION
STORY AND ART: PHILIP HESTER
INKS: JIM WOODYARD





END

Project Seigh "TERROR in 3rd Period"
Wow, look at her -
Diane Kaminsky.
OK, CLASS, PAY ATTENTION.
She was perfect.
TODAY, EACH OF YOU WILL DISPLAY THE EMOTIONS ON THESE SLIPS OF PAPER.
Man...
I'd helped her with some posters for some election and that was it.
WE'LL PARTNER ALPHABETICALLY- CHRISTIAN AND GOODSON...
She didn't know it, of course.
Boy, I loved Sociology class.
waitaminnit.
this is mine?
LOVE
HERRERA AND JASON...
KAMINSKY AND MEYER.
Love?

While I pondered disappearing,
or suicide,
others did thier thing.
ARRRRR
THAT'S GOOD, MIKE.
NOW, PICK UP THE BOOKS.
I guess that was anger.
Lucky.
Why is it so easy for some people?
OK OK I GET IT!
LET'S SEE-OH, KEN AND DIANE.
Uh oh, time's up.
Hi Ken, ready?
Uhhh...
Oh, Man! What was I gonna do?
...and before I could stop myself...
She actually pulled away.
Couldn't blame her- books flying everywhere.
OK, CLASS, WHAT EMOTION WAS THAT?
friendship?
compassion?
Pity?
uhhhh
Blindness?
NOT AN EMOTION, JOHN.
oh.
KEN?
love.
Awwwwww
Geez. You're kidding!
huh? LOVE?
c'mon!
naw.
funny what's easy to show.
Van Meveren '93

SPOTLIGHT ON: RUBBER BLANKET

DAREDEVIL and BATMAN: YEAR ONE a number of years ago—look again.

They were wrong.

If you have not picked up an issue of David Mazzucchelli and Richmond Lewis' yearly anthology RUBBER BLANKET, then you must have had your head buried in the sand for the past three years, or just don't enjoy well-written and illustrated comics. It is quite honestly one the finest comics on the market today. Each jammed-filled issue is a joy to not only read, but also to marvel at the care that is taken with the presentation package of the over-sized comic itself. It's a beautiful book, inside and out.

RUBBER BLANKET 2 was nominated for a handful of comic industry awards, including "Excellence in Presentation" and "Best Single Issue."

1993's issue, RUBBER BLANKET #3, not only contains my vote for best story of the year with David Mazzucchelli's "Big Man," but it also features

chance, deserve higher recognition.

art by a master painter and feeling the emotions tumbling off the page and embracing you—capturing

itself; pulling you into the story.

will entice and intrigue you enough

Read the "Spotlight."

Give RUBBER BLANKET a try.

Since winning legions of fans and awards with Frank Miller on DAREDEVIL and BATMAN: YEAR ONE, **David Mazzucchelli** has been busy furthering the field of comic art. His art was featured on the cover of THE NEW YORKER in 1993 and he was the 1993 recipient of the Erwin Swann Award, inaugurated in 1989 "to honor emerging and insufficiently recognized talents in the field of cartooning, caricature and the comic strip." He's currently hard at work on RUBBER BLANKET #4 and an illustrated 140-page black-and-white adaptation of Paul Auster's mystery novel CITY OF GLASS, published by Avon Books in the summer of 1994. This is the first in a series of comic-adaptations of mystery novels; the series is called NEON LIGHT and

for the new DRAWN & QUARTERLY, which will appear later this year.

BIG
MAN
MAZZUCCHELLI
HA HA HA
LOOK OUT
STUPID
HEY! C'MERE!

IS HE DEAD?
I DON' KNOW!

HERE... POKE HIM WITH THIS.
YOU DO IT!

GGUUU
YAAAAAAAAA
DOWN THERE! SEE!
YOU LEFT REBECCA HERE ALONE?
I THOUGHT SHE WAS FOLLOWING US!

BG MAA!
BGG MAA!
YES... A BIG MAN.
WHAT THE HELL IS HE?
LET'S DRAG HIM OUT AND SEE.

P.O. Box 3067
Uptown Station
Hoboken, NJ 07030

All checks or money orders should be made payable to: RUBBER BLANKET PRESS

RUBBER BLANKET PRESS

THIS ANNUAL ANTHOLOGY PUBLISHED BY REFORMED MAINSTREAM-COMICS ARTIST DAVID MAZZUCCHELLI AND PAINTER RICHMOND LEWIS IS A SWEET AND SOUR MISSING LINK BETWEEN HIGH AND LOW--A FREE-FALL FALAFEL DIPPED IN BLACK HUMOR.

RUBBER BLANKET 3

presenting

BIG MAN Written and drawn by David Mazzucchelli. A quiet village is shaken up when a giant is mysteriously washed ashore. This 40-page story should appeal to fans of Mazzucchelli's old work as well as those following his current direction

THE DEATH OF MONSIEUR ABSURDE He's short! He's French! He's existential! And.. he's dead? Mazzucchelli introduces a new character, only to promptly dispose of him.

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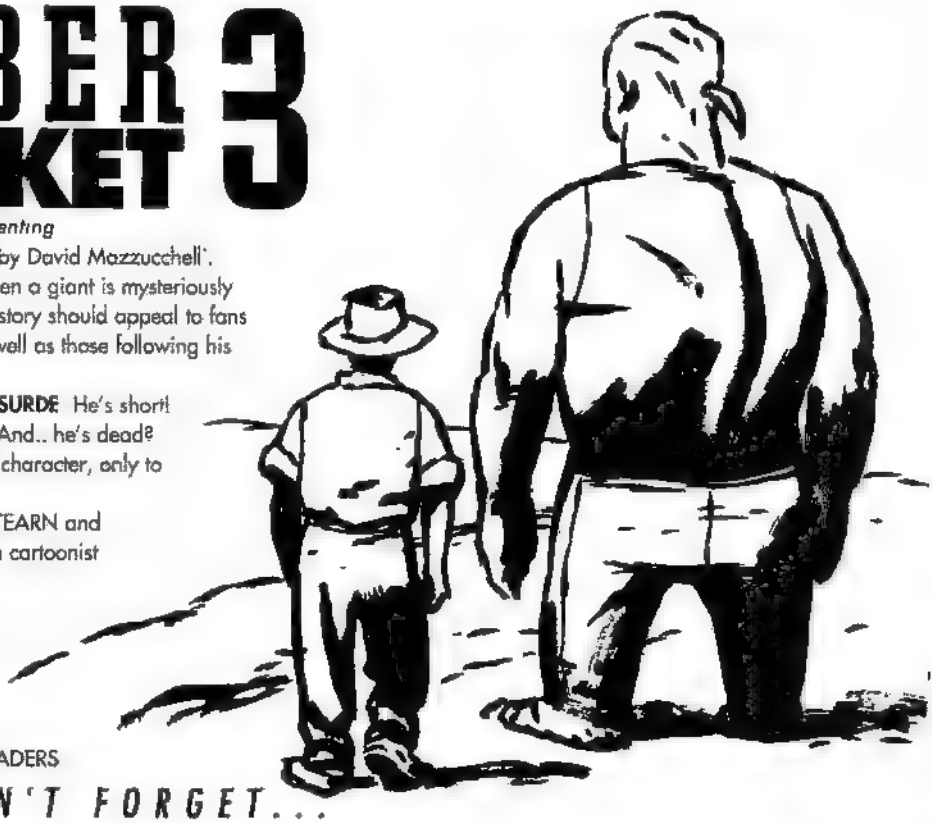

AND DON'T FORGET...

RUBBER BLANKET 1
by Mazzucchelli, Lewis
48 pages $5.75

RUBBER BLANKET 2
by Mazzucchelli, Hornung, Stearn, Lewis
56 pages $7.75

The first two issues of RUBBER BLANKET lead you over fleshy topography from an industrial landscape to a creepy amusement park, dodging asteroids and banana peels along the way.

"...a printer's orgy. Luckily, when the dazzlement of the package wears off, there's still something well worth seeing inside."
--THE COMICS JOURNAL

"commix at their finest"
--James Sturm
THE STRANGER (Seattle)

RUBBER BLANKET PRESS

Since I'm not going to have room in the next issue for a letters page, I think I'm just going to run two issues worth of letters in this issue. Spoiler warning this is the Carl Pietrantonio and Olav Beemer special, collector's item letters page issue. Proceed with caution. You have been warned.

Ted Kuslo
Editor-in chief, BIZARA
PO Box 3118
Albany, NY 12203-0118

Dear Joe,

NEGATIVE BURN recently worked its way into my grub by little hands and I'm glad it did! Quite the collection of stuff you've got there. I especially enjoyed the fact that you included non narrative material, such as sketch books. Also, the artists represented in the issue that I got (No. 5) all seem quite capable of bringing life to black and white work, as opposed to merely drawing without colors. And what a great cover!

As a kind of thanks for creating something this enjoyable, I'm sending you a copy of my first publishing effort, a thing I call BIZARA.

Keep up the great work on NEGATIVE BURN.

Thanks for the free copy, Ted. For anyone who enjoys fanzines about fiction, poetry, and/or music reviews (this particular issue even had a Peter Townshend interview!) send $2.50 to the above address for a sample issue.

Link W. Herrman
305 N. Oak
Goddard, KS 67052-0137

To the Mad Hatters,

I have been enjoying NEGATIVE BURN from the start. I did have to do some hunting for issue #2. The shop I frequent ran out of copies.

I think you deserve all the press you're getting with all the marquee names flocking to you. Little did I know when I picked up the first issue it was going to be the haunt of some of my favorites. I'm especially glad you've adopted some of the orphans from CHEVAL NOIR—MR. MAMOULIAN and CLASSICS DESECRATED so far. Will any more refugees be arriving?

I like the sketchbooks. They give insight into the different creators whose work appears there.

My BIX address will get you a quicker response. See you on the net.

I am on CompuServe (address number 72164,1134) and believe I'll start playing around with Internet shortly, but I'm not really sure how to go about that at the moment. I'd love to get e-mail about NEGATIVE BURN, BLACK MIST, KILROY IS HERE, or just to chat, so anyone out there who has the capability to do so, then do it!

Richard J. Arndt
Box 2795
Wendover, NV 89883

I enjoy your magazine and am looking for back issues. Both comic shops and distributors have none. I need to get #2, #5, and #6. Can you help out? Hope so. Keep up the good work.

Look back an issue or two and you'll find that Caliber Press is offering back issues for sale.

Nat Gertler
via CompuServe

Joe,

Just wanted to let you know that I finally got a copy of NB 4, and particularly liked your KILROY IS HERE installment. It built well to a good, solid ending. I just figured that with everyone raving about the editing on the book, they might have been lax in pointing out the quality of your writing.

Thanks, Nat. It is nice when someone notices that I write as well.

Letters

Olav Beemer Brugakker 36-06 3704 LP Zeist
The Netherlands Europe

Dear Joe and Charles,

I've intentionally refrained from writing to you guys for a couple of months, just to see exactly where NEGATIVE BURN would go. Now, after reading NEGATIVE BURN #5, I can safely say you've established yourselves in my eyes, and more than deserve your place in the already crowded market these days with a very well done anthology book. Talent in abundance, so that won't be a problem, right?

Let's see, SOJOURN was perhaps the best feature in this issue, with a moody and very grim atmosphere all over it. This, combined with the dark artwork, all made for some intriguing reading. In Sojourn's speech, I recognized some of the thoughts about dreams as they're shared by none other than Neil Gaiman, so I can't help to compare this Sojourn entity to the Sandman. I definitely would not mind seeing a whole lot more of Sojourn in the foreseeable future.

MR. MAMOULIAN managed to make me chuckle for the first time since the beginning in this series, and it's much appreciated.

Then, THE GIANT proved to be a nice, witty tale with surprisingly good artwork, after which the Arthur Suydam SKETCHBOOK bestowed some more beautiful artistic highlights upon us. Whatever you do, keep these SKETCHBOOK features around, as they give the readers a glimpse of what some lesser known artists are capable of.

DRAGOON was perhaps the second best story in NEGATIVE BURN #5, although I felt the somewhat cartoony artwork would've worked better on a light-hearted tale. Writer Gregg Kendrick provided us with a look at a bleak future, one which might not be as impossible as one might think. A chilling story, that's for sure.

Variety is the spice of life, they say, and I tend to believe that's the undoubted truth. Keep this as varied as you've been doing over the last couple of issues, combining both unknown amateurs and better-known professionals, and you've ensured yourselves of my $2.95 worth every month!

Since it seems you like James Pruett and Gregg Kendrick's writing the best this issue (and I seem to remember you loved James' THE APPARITION from NEGATIVE BURN #1), you should check out the BLACK MIST series—featuring the lead story by James Pruett and Avido Khahaifa, with back-up story by Gregg Kendrick and Casey Jones! Issue #3 is scheduled to be out in May. Speaking of releases in May, don't forget to ask your local comic shop to order KILROY IS HERE #0! Cover by Brian Bolland, with story and art by yours truly and Ken Meyer Jr.

Olav Beemer Brugakker 36-06 3704 LP Zeist The Netherlands
Europe

Dear Joe and Charles,

Nine features in one single issue, now that's getting your money's worth! Not only did those aforementioned features give the readers the much needed variety, it also provided a couple of very intriguing tales whose quality was right up there, next to the established anthology books.

KILROY IS HERE was yet another good chapter in the story of the mysterious Kilroy, and I'm looking very much forward to seeing more of this character, both here and in his upcoming series. The story has a great feeling over it, and this chapter had an unexpected twist at the end, making it all the more interesting.

VIXEN, despite its being written and drawn some nineteen years ago, was a truly horrifying story about a man caught between a rock and a hard place, facing certain death or certain living death as a vampire. The inner struggle of Gerald was portrayed quite masterfully, and the whole tale had the same atmosphere as the now classic horror stories of the seventies, yet being as interesting as possible nowadays, in the nineties.

CONDITIONED was another completely weird, almost sadistic story from the head of Phillip Hester, whose almost chaotic work I still remember from BONESHAKER. The plot was good, and it was nice to see the Icebaby found a way to break out of the never-ending circle of choices, by not making one. Good work, altogether!

MR. MAMOULIAN is indeed getting better, and especially after the quite good installment of last issue.

JOE SMITH, THE BEAST was the second hilarious work from Greg DiGenti to grace the pages of this series, and yet again, it was the absolute highlight as far as the light-hearted tales is concerned. Especially the single thought-balloon "They never did, though, the bastards!" made me laugh out loud. Only his portrayal of the average NEGATIVE BURN reader, as seen on the back cover of a recent issue ... Well, let's just say that I have yet to meet a NEGATIVE BURN reader looking like that!

All in all, a great issue, with myriad of different genres for every kind of reader, and above all, it had that professional feel to it. It's been a great first six issues, here's to the one-year anniversary, guys!

Keep those letters coming, Olav, and tell your friends to write us as well! I love getting letters from overseas, especially since one of my friends likes to clip the stamps off your envelopes and add them to his collection. So, if you're reading this from a foreign country, write us a letter! I'm curious to see where our NEGATIVE BURN readers are—plus my friend needs more stamps!

Carl Pietrantonio
517 Idylwood Lane
Laredo, Texas 78041

Dear Joe, Charles and folks,

Well, it's depressing to say this, but this issue of NEGATIVE BURN (# 5) is in my opinion, the weakest one to come out yet. The other four issues previous to this have been very good and I am not intending to drop this title. It's just that with an anthology, one takes one's chances. This time I lost. While I am sure that some of the stories in here were good for some folks, none of them (other than MR. MAMOULIAN) sent me at all.

I found SOJOURN to be rather confusing, possibly due to the fact that I found it hard to follow. It seemed most confusing. Was this fellow doomed to do the same thing because he threw his chance away at the beginning of the story? Or was this his version of hell? I didn't get it.

SKYWAY was also seemingly pointless to me. I don't understand what the point of this was. Was it just an illustrated poem or something? It didn't seem to go anywhere for me.

Even the CLASSICS DESECRATED story wasn't that good this month. I wasn't impressed with the story here either, although the art was good at least.

I am sorry that this issue didn't seem to be up to the level of the previous ones, but I am sure that this is a blip in the line. I like anthologies for the very reason that you never know what you are going to get and also because it is such a grab bag. I am sure that the next issue will be completely different. Predictable is one thing that this title is not. I like that so I will be sticking around.

I also was late getting this issue due to a distributor (Diamond) screw up in not shipping to my dealer and my having to try to get this via mail order from another person.

Anyway, I am sure next issue will be better. Thanks for listening.

Well, you can't win everyone all the time. Sorry, Carl, but thanks for staying with us.

Carl Pietrantonio via CompuServe

Joe, Man! You guys have rapidly made NEGATIVE BURN one of the top comic antholgies around. What a line-up you've got for the future! I am anxiously awaiting my copy of # 5 in the mail and then shortly after that, issue # 6. One of the best new titles of any kind to come out in the last couple years, easily.

Olav Beemer
Brugakker 36-06
3704 LP Zeist
The Netherlands
Europe

Dear Joe,

WHOA, a real Paul Gulacy cover gracing the front-page of NEGATIVE BURN #7? And a really smashingly beautiful one to boot, too! My fondness for Paul's striking visuals has been around for a long time now, and I've noticed how well this guy is at drawing short installments for anthology books. Imagine my outcry of pure joy when I found out a cover wasn't the only Gulacy work in this issue of NEGATIVE BURN!

The VITRUVIAN MAN was nicely-paced, of course thanks to writer Steve Mattsson, but it was Paul's amazing artwork which made me love this short story the way I've enjoyed it. From front to back, from beginning to ending, his art looked incredibly smooth, especially with the splendid usage of shades in every panel. Hopefully, including a star like Paul will attract some new readers to this book, and with Neil Gaiman writing a future story for NEGATIVE BURN, you can hardly go wrong anymore.

JAZZ AGE CHRONICLES was surprisingly good. Ted Slampyak's art looks simple at first sight, but there's so much detail in it when you take the time to take a closer, more concentrated look. And, above all, the story was witty and the dialogue was fresh without being sort of cliché. When you've got more of Ted, I'm eager to see it soon.

CLASSICS DESECRATED was pure genius. Priceless story, sure to make me chuckle even when I re-read it for the sixth time, brilliant artwork, right up there with the great style used in several cartoon videos, and an ending to laugh your socks off. Good stuff, altogether!

Well, Malcolm Bourne was right in his EDITORIAL. NEGATIVE BURN features stories about many, many things, and that's just why I keep enjoying a book like this so much. Chances that one doesn't like ANY of the features are so minimal, it would be a shame not to check out an issue of NEGATIVE BURN!

That's exactly how we feel, Olav! You're bound to find something you really enjoy in each and every issue of NEGATIVE BURN. Glad you like Ted Slampyak's work in this issue. We already have two more stories by Ted in house (one another JAZZ AGE CHRONICLES episode!) that will be scheduled pretty quickly. Also, be sure to check out ROADWAYS #1 (April release) for more art by Ted—written by NEGATIVE BURN alumni Jeff Lang and inked by alumni Steve Lieber!

Carl Pietrantonio
517 Idylwood Lane
Laredo, Texas 78041

Dear Joe & folks,

Well.... Jeez, I feel bad after slamming the last issue so hard, but wasn't exactly thrilled so much by this issue either. Some of it was good, but some, well, not that great.

KILROY: I liked this but was left feeling like the story was half told. I am sure though that this is leading somewhere but my problem is that I can't seem to tell where. I will wait and see though.

VIXEN: This was drawn in 1974? That must be a record for waiting to see publication! I liked it until the last page. I feel let down by not knowing Gerald's reaction to what he has given in to. Interesting art, I must say. Will we soon be seeing more recent work by Mr. Lloyd?

I really don't enjoy the sketchbooks. I suppose there are those that do though, so a little something for everyone.

MR. MAMOULIAN was very depressing this time. I find this little character fascinating and am glad that you are going to run all of these in order.

CLASSICS DESECRATED was good as usual. I enjoy these. Much better than the last one.

I guess overall, it seemed like there was just too many things in here. Maybe fewer but longer stories would be better? I think so, but I am still enjoying this and since I never know what is going to come next, I am willing to wait and see what the future issues will bring. I know there are some great people involved here, so what the heck.

So, readers, do you think we're putting in too much for you to digest? Well, I hope not, because, as you may have noticed, starting last issue we're now offering you 40 pages of story and art for the same price of $2.95! What a bargain!

Joe Pruett
Editor

NEXT MONTH:

This is a busy month! First of all, **NEGATIVE BURN #11** is a HUGE issue! Front cover by MOEBIUS!! Followed by the adaptation of NEIL GAIMAN'S original story, "We Can Get Them For You Wholesale," illustrated by KEN MEYER JR.! CHAS TRUOG brings us "Anatomy Lesson" and BRIAN BOLLAND thrills us with another installment of "Mr. Mamoulian!" BRIAN STELFREEZE comes aboard to illustrate the next episode of ALAN MOORE'S "Songbook" and MARK RICKETTS continues his "Twilight People" serial! Also, "Sketchbook" by MARK CHIARELLO (BATMAN/HOUDINI), DOUG WHEELER'S "Classics Desecrated" with MATT FEAZELL, DONNA BARR, and MIKE HOFFMAN, and "The Hungry Ones" by Malcolm Bourne, Martha Henry, and David Windett!

KILROY IS HERE #0, with cover by BRIAN BOLLAND! Story and art by JOE PRUETT and KEN MEYER JR.! Kilroy is drawn to rural Georgia, circa 1956. There, a young boy, surrounded by mysterious deaths in his community, must overcome his own fears and mistreatment by his abusive father to confront the enigmatic being known as Kilroy.

BLACK MIST #3 by JAMES PRUETT and AVIDO KHAHAIFA, and stunning painted cover art by KEN MEYER JR. (the man's everywhere) will also be on sale in May! Black Mist goes on a rampage as his soul falls further under the seductive nature of the mist. Meanwhile, Dr. Himler, the scientist responsible for the creation of Black Mist, plots his destruction.

Also, this May be sure to check out **AXIS OMEGA,** featuring the first episode of SEPPUKU by JOE PRUETT, ANDREW ROBINSON, and TIM BRADSTREET—soon to be an ongoing series from AXIS COMICS this fall. Cover art by BRAIN BOLLAND!

HORN-BLOWING SECTION: The patrons of CompuServe's Comics Forum have announced their final ballot for their 1993's Comic Awards. NEGATIVE BURN has been nominated in the "Best Anthology" category and JOE PRUETT has been nominated in the "Best Achievement by an Editor" category. The winners will be announced at the Motor City Con from March 25-27 and on CompuServe on March 28. Thanks for the nominations and recognition from all those who voted!

NEGATIVE BURN

Created and Written by
Joe Pruett

Illustrated by
Ken Meyer Jr.

Cover by
Brian Bolland

Kilroy Is Here © 1994 by Joe Pruett, art © 1994 by Brian Bolland.

"Appropriately somber, with an unusual sense of history,
it promises mystery, tragedy, and a certain painful catharsis.
This one's definitely worth a look."

Paul Chadwick
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